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FROM: NEW YORK

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1444, OCTOBER 24, 7 PM

PRIORITY

CUBA

FOLLOWING TECHNICAL BRIEFING OF AFRICAN AND ARAB REPS WITH EXCELLENT EXPOSITION OF PROBLEM BY MCCLOY, STEVENSON ASKED FOLLOWING TO REMAIN FOR DISCUSSION: FONMIN ZINZOU (DAHOMY), SANOUSSI (SUDAN), HAKIM (LEBANON), BEN HIMA (MOROCCO), IGNACIO-PINTO (DAHOMY), DOE (LIBERIA), RIFAI (JORDAN), FONMIN AUBAME (GABON), SWAI (TANGANYIKA), RAKOTOMALALA (MADAGASCAR), AND ASIODU (NIGERIA).

STEVENSON EXPLAINED IN DETAIL WHY WE INSIST ON INSPECTION AND ASSURANCES WE CAN DEPEND UPON BEFORE CALLING OFF QUARANTINE, AND STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF TIME FACTOR AS REASON WHY UNCONTROLLED COOLING-OFF PERIOD UNACCEPTABLE TO US.

ZINZOU SAID ALL UNDERSTAND SERIOUSNESS OF PROBLEM. POSED HYPOTHESIS, HOWEVER, OF GA DECIDING ASK FOR CESSATION ALL MEASURES BY BOTH SIDES, AND CALLING FOR DISMANTLING BASES UNDER UN CONTROL. UNDERSTOOD US WOULD AGREE, BUT WONDERED WHAT HAPPENED IF SOVIETS AND CUBANS THEN REFUSED.

STEVENSON REPLIED HE HOPED ALL IN GA WHO SEEKING PRESERVE PEACE WOULD USE THEIR BEST EFFORTS TO PERSUADE USSR AND CUBA TO ACCEPT SAME SORT OF GUARANTEES UN HAS PROVIDED IN PAST CASES AND WHICH US WILLING ACCEPT. IF SOVIETS REALLY SEEKING PEACEFUL SOLUTION, DIFFICULT UNDERSTAND WHY THEY WOULD NOT ACCEPT GUARANTEES.

ZINZOU SAID IT NOT QUESTION OF SPARING ANY EFFORT IN ATTEMPT CONVINCE SOVIETS, BUT WONDERED WHAT HAPPENS IF EFFORT

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UNSUCCESSFUL. STEVENSON REPLIED WE WOULD NOT ACCEPT UNILATERAL SOLUTION IN WHICH WE STOPPED QUARANTINE, WHILE LEAVING SOVIETS FREE CONTINUE INSTALL ARMS.

RIFAI ASKED IF PROBLEM HAD TO BE DEALT WITH AS WHOLE. THOUGHT CRISIS COULD BE TAKEN IN STAGES. IMMEDIATE ISSUE WAS RISK OF CONFLICT WHEN SHIPS INTERCEPTED. COULD WE NOT CONCENTRATE ON THAT ISSUE AND TRY FIND WAY TO AVOIDING CLASH? IF TWO-WEEK COOLING OFF PERIOD TOO LONG, WE SHOULD THINK OF OTHER WAYS AVOID INCIDENT. ZINZOU AGREED, SAYING HE UNDERSTOOD WHEN WE SAY IF WE LET SOVIETS CONTINUE, WILL BE TOO LATE, BUT POINT WAS INCIDENT COULD MAKE SOLUTION OVERALL PROBLEM IMPOSSIBLE. TIME CRITICAL, FOR WITH BEST EFFORTS, COULD NOT POSSIBLY GET UN ACTION THROUGH FOR DAY OR SO, AND INCIDENT COULD HAPPEN BEFORE THAT.

STEVENSON REPLIED HE SAW NO WAY TO DEAL WITH IMMEDIATE RISK OTHER THAN FOR SOVIETS TO TURN BACK THEIR SHIPS. PRESSURE OF OTHER COUNTRIES MIGHT HELP CONVINCE SOVIETS TO DO THIS.

ZINZOU SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY UN PATROL TO BE ADDED TO US FLEET, WITH UN SHIP TO GIVE ORDER TO SOVIET SHIP TO STOP. UNDERSTOOD US MIGHT AGREE TO THIS, BUT ADMITTED IT WOULD NOT COVER QUESTION OF DISMANTLING EXISTING BASES. STEVENSON COMMENTED THIS WAS POSSIBILITY, AS FAR AS SHIPPING ASPECT OF PROBLEM CONCERNED, BUT DIFFICULT ORGANIZE UN NAVAL PATROL ON SHORT NOTICE.

WE BELIEVE MEETING WAS MOST USEFUL, AND REPS ATTENDING NOW HAVE CLEAR PICTURE OF US POSITION. WE ALREADY HAVE REPORT FROM MALAYAN REP THAT HE FINDS SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN ATTITUDE OF AFRICANS WITH FAR BETTER APPRECIATION US POSITION AFTER THIS MEETING.

STEVENSON.

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